COMMANDERS DIGEST

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE • WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Vol. 3, No. 49 June 21, 1967

JUL 10 1967

Modified 'Buffer' & Lubricant Are Supplied for M-16 Rifle

Defense Department officials said June 15 that M-16 "buffer" modifications currently being sent to personnel in Vietnam are routine Army and Colt Manufacturing Co. "product improvements" which began rolling off assembly lines in late 1966.

First deliveries to Vietnam started in early 1967, a DOD spokesman said, and will continue until all M-16s are modified.

Principal effect of the new "buffer" is to cut back the normal 740-800 rounds-per-minute rate of fire by "perhaps 100 rounds," the spokesman said. This reduction in the rate of fire is intended to cut down on wear and tear in the weapon. He said the new cycling rate will not change the M-16's tactical employment.

The spokesman also said that another standard lubricant, primarily used for machine guns and aerial weapons, is being sent to Vietnam for the humid climate because it has less viscosity under these weather conditions than the lubricant originally used on the weapon. If personnel "over-oil" their weapons, they can possibly foul their ammunition and the M-16 must be fired "dry," the spokesman said.

The DOD official said other M-16 modifications like chrome plating the firing chamber and bore are under study. Marine Corps Commandant Wallace M. Greene Jr., discussed this possibility when controversy over Marine use of the M-16 sprang up.

Eugene Becker Appointed Army Assistant Secretary

Eugene M. Becker has succeeded W. Brewster Kopp as Assistant Secretary of the Army (Financial Management).

He assumed the post June 13.

Secretary Becker is responsible for supervision of the Comptroller of the Army and financial management activities of the Department of the Army.

Prior to his Presidential appointment as an assistant secretary with the Army, Mr. Becker was director of budget for New York City. Mr. Kopp resigned to return to private life.

The 36-year-old assistant secretary was an Army enlisted man from 1954-56, serving as a foreign press analyst at U.S. European Command Headquarters in Paris.

USSTRICOM BRIEFING—Arriving by helicopter to attend an airdrop briefing held at the U.S. Army Quartermaster School's Airborne Department, Ft. Lee, Va., are, left to right: Air Force Lt. Gen. Fred M. Dean, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Strike Command; Brig. Gen. Howard E. Kreidler, Vice Commander, 21st Air Force; Army Brig. Gen. Fred C. Allen, J-4, USSTRICOM, and Col. Edward G. Thomas, Director, Airborne Department, Army Quartermaster School.

McNamara Advises President Break In Rail Shipments Could Affect Defense

Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara has advised the President that an interruption of rail movements of Defense equipment and related supplies at this time "would be an act of utter folly, an incredible evasion of our responsibilities to our nation."

He noted the United States has a half million men now engaged in Pacific operations and simultaneously face a crisis of unpredictable dimensions in the Middle East.

Mr. McNamara said these were strong words, but he said he knew of no others to describe the effect on our military posture.

He said this opinion is not merely his but is also shared by Deputy Defense Secretary Cyrus R. Vance and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The Defense Secretary made these remarks in a memorandum to the President released by the White House June 14.

The memo followed a Defense Department review of the effects of a rail strike on our national security.

Washington Memos

AIR FORCE SYSTEM Command's Electronic Systems Division has awarded a $3.5 million contract to EG&G Inc., Bedford, Mass., for development and production of weather chart transmission and recording equipment for worldwide installation at Air Force bases. Designated weather plotter transmitter (GMT-3) and receiver (GMH-3), devices will enable Air Force to transmit weather maps, wind charts and cloud charts from weather forecast centers to operating air bases five times faster than present system.

AIR FORCE CAPT. August J. Caponecchi received Brig. Gen. Mervin E. Cross Award for scholastic achievement while a graduate Astronautics resident student at Air University's Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. Award is named after AFIT's first Commandant.

MARINE MAMMALS will join 40 Navy Aquanauts during Sealab III. Two porpoises, two sea lions and a harbor seal will be used for search and rescue, delivery of small items, propulsion aid and assistance in underwater photography, during operation at Marine Bioscience Facility, Naval Missile Center, Point Mugu, Calif.

USAF BRIG. GEN. John A. Brooks III has been named Executive Director of Technical and Logistics Services for Defense Supply Agency, succeeding Air Force Brig. Gen. William L. Hamrick, who plans to retire. Appointment is effective July 1.

ARMY AVIATION MATERIEL Command has awarded a $3.4 million contract for production of rotary wing blades to Bell Helicopter Co., Ft. Worth, Tex. Contract calls for production and delivery of 1,239 rotary wing blades required in support of Army's UH-1 helicopter.

265TH RADIO RELAY Squadron, Maine Air National Guard, South Portland, Maine, has been named outstanding Air Reserve Forces unit in Air Force Communications Service for 1966. AFCS Air Reserve Forces trophy was presented to unit at June 17 ceremonies in South Portland by Brig. Gen. Paul R. Stoney, Vice Commander, AFCS.

1967 AIR FORCE Photography Contest will be conducted at Langley AFB, Va. Judging is scheduled Nov. 15-17. Winning entries will be judged for consideration in the 13th Interservice Photography Contest in 1969. Preliminary contests begin at base level.

TWENTY-NINE SENIOR Air Force chaplains from seven major air commands are curently undergoing three-week course at Air University's Air Force Chaplain School. All members of class are lieutenant colonels from installations in continental United States.

FIVE OFFICERS from 5th Air Force in Japan spent a week with 2nd Infantry Division in Korea as part of Exercise Teamwork I, a program designed to further interservice cooperation. During their visit, Air Force officers were briefed on mission and operation of division and its various units, and observed artillery, armor and missile demonstrations.

ARMY SELECTION BOARD will meet around June 26 to recommend officers to temporary major general and permanent brigadier general promotion lists.

CHIEF OF NAVAL Operations has approved for first time assignment of women Navy Nurse Corps officers to the Station Hospital, Naval Support Activity, DaNang, Vietnam. First contingent expected at hospital around Aug. 1. Women Navy nurses served ashore in Vietnam at Station Hospital of Headquarters Support Activity in Saigon from October 1963 until March 1966. Four of those nurses received Purple Hearts following bomb explosion at officers' quarters on Christmas Eve 1964. Since February 1965 Navy Nurse Corps officers have served as members of a military surgical team with AID.

COMMANDANT, MEDICAL Field Service School, Brooke Army Medical Center, Tex., Brig. Gen. Glenn J. Collins, is scheduled to replace Brig. Gen. James A. Wier as Surgeon, U. S. Army, Vietnam. Gen. Collins will be succeeded in his present post by Brig. Gen. O. Elliott Ursin, Commanding General, 9th Hospital Center, Heidelberg, Germany.

NASA HAS PUBLISHED an atlas containing color photographs of the earth taken by astronauts. Book, entitled "Earth Photographs from Gemini III, IV, and V," was published to make pictures available to scientists for study.

A NEW THESAURUS that standardizes technical vocabulary throughout the military, industry and academic world is scheduled for publication later this year. "Thesaurus of Engineering and Scientific Terms" is being published by DOD in conjunction with the Engineers Joint Council. A magnetic tape version of the thesaurus with programs for computer manipulation will also be made available. Manager of the DOD effort, known as Project Lex, was the Office of Naval Research.

BRANCH OF AMERICAN Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics has been formed at Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif. Purpose of organization is to further education and research in fields of aeronautics and astronautics.

THREE HUNDRED FIFTY-SIX Air Force ROTC students will be commissioned second lieutenants at Gunter AFB, Ala., June 30. Cadets began three-week Summer Training Encampment on June 10. This is first of two AFROTC Summer Training Encampments slated for Gunter this summer. Next encampment—a six-week session—is slated to begin July 9 with an estimated 220 cadets.

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Published semi-weekly by Press Division Armed Forces News Bureau, 1117 No. 19th St., Arlington, Va. 22209, a unified activity of the Directorate for Armed Forces Information and Education, OASD(M). This publication contains official information, news and policy, direct from Washington authorized sources. Reproduction of content is authorized. Suggested dateline for materials used is WASHINGTON (AFNB).

Background for Commanders

CRISIS IN WEST AFRICA: NIGERIA

From Nigeria come continuing news reports speculating that central government armed forces may soon attempt to regain control over the Eastern region of the country, which announced its secession from the Republic on May 30 and declared itself the independent Republic of Biafra. Therefore, wide attention is focused on Nigeria, once considered a model for the young African nations. This nation, which lies on the west coast of the continent at the head of the Gulf of Guinea, is the most populous country in Africa.

U.S. policy toward Nigeria has been one of cordial cooperation since it gained its independence and became a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations Oct. 1, 1960. The aim of the U.S. Government has been to assist in the orderly progress of the new country and to help promote the aspirations of its people for accelerated economic and social advancement. The U.S. attitude was reflected in an address by Joseph Palmer II, Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, given shortly before the Eastern region announced its secession.

Tasks of National Governments

"The task of building governments which truly reflect the aspirations of the people of Africa," said Mr. Palmer, "is a critical problem throughout most of the continent. The President recognized this in May [1966] when he spoke of the never-ending effort of nations, new or old, to combine freedom with responsibility, liberty with order.

"I don't think that any of us underestimate the difficulties this task entails. In Africa it is part of the change and experimentation going on in many of its nations. We are well aware of the dangers in the breakdown of law and order and the handicaps which political instability pose for sound economic development.

"The great State of Nigeria, as we all know, is experiencing its time of troubles. This most populous country of Africa, in its second year of political crisis, has been subject to centrifugal forces in which regional, tribal and personal pressures all have played their part. The period of instability is beginning to show a cumulative adverse effect on the economy of the country, with all regions of Nigeria being hurt both in their normal trade and development by the swirl of events and pressures. It would be a great tragedy to Africa and the world if this trend continued to the point where it threatened the great potential for national development which Nigeria possesses in such outstanding degree and which has so engaged the energies of her statesmen.

"Nigeria's development of its national cohesion and the form of its political association is, of course, for the Nigerians themselves to determine. In these critical times, her many friends can offer moral support and sympathetic understanding from the knowledge gained through experience that the road to full national identity is a long and difficult one, and that each country must travel it in its own manner. We well remember that our own synthesis was achieved with long travail over 90 years following our independence. We wish for Nigeria and other nations facing similar difficulties a less arduous and more peaceful resolution of their problems in a form best suited to their circumstances and aspirations."

Background *

As a result of an attempt by a small group of army officers to seize power, the civilian government asked the Army to take control in January 1966. The new National Military Government abolished the offices of president and prime minister, regional governors and premiers, and federal and regional legislatures. In their place a Supreme Military Council and an Executive Council were set up. In May 1966 the government announced the abolition of the federation and declared the country a republic.

The National Military Government stated its intention to remain in office to maintain law and order until a new constitution, prepared in accordance with the wishes of the people, was brought into being. The government publicized as two of its major aims the fostering of a sense of national unity and the furthering of economic development.

History and Geography

Nigeria became independent in 1960 as a federation of three regions—Northern, Western, and Eastern—under a constitution providing for a parliamentary form of federal government. A fourth region, the Midwest, was set up in 1963.

With an estimated population of over 55 million people, Nigeria contains hundreds of different tribal groups, many of which speak unrelated languages. The largest group in the Eastern provinces is the Ibo, who have rapidly increased their influence in trade, clerical work, and professions throughout the country in recent years.

In the Northern provinces the largest tribes speak a common language, Hausa, and have a common religion, Islam; the most populous groups are the Hausa and Fulani. The Yoruba of the Western provinces are by custom a closely-knit tribe; many in the northern part of the area are Moslems. In the Midwestern provinces are found several smaller linguistic groups; Ibo and Yoruba people are in the minority in this area.

** Excerpts from State Department "Background Notes, Nigeria."*

Military Ocean Terminals Top Million Tons in March

March was the first month since the buildup in Vietnam that military ocean terminals handled a million tons of cargo.

Navy officials said the military services are now able to clear more than one million short tons of cargo monthly for military and U.S. AID activities in Vietnam.

It was pointed out that increased port facilities has brought about a drastic reduction in the time a ship remains in Vietnam.

Thirty-six ships can now be unloaded simultaneously at the 12 ports in South Vietnam. The average number of ships daily in Vietnam is 65.

SHAPE Commander Addresses National War College Graduates

General Lyman L. Lemnitzer, SHAPE Commander, told National War College graduates June 9 that in the nuclear age there are few top level decisions that do not have international implications.

Speaking at graduation ceremonies in Washington, D.C., the general said the essential task facing a military leader or members of his staff "is one of making a sound determination based upon numerous conflicting and competing interests of various governments, agencies or nations."

General Lemnitzer pointed out the need for complete objectivity in all decisions despite natural and inherent biases which demand a breadth of knowledge beyond the narow perimeter of a single service or nation. "No service or nationality," he said, "has a monopoly on the best possible approach" to all problems.

The SHAPE Commander said the United States' 16 years in NATO has shown that the requirement for an international view does not pose any real conflict of conscience or valid questions of divided loyalties among military personnel.

LOWER AWAY—Air Force Maj. Rolland W. Moore familiarizes himself with the tree lowering device during a personal equipment refresher class at Da Nang AB in Vietnam. Maj. Moore was one of many 366th Tactical Fighter Wing pilots who received training in the use of the new device.

Military Airlift Command Awards Airlines $485 Million in Contracts

Contracts totaling $485 million have been awarded to 27 U.S. commercial airlines to fly military passengers and cargo during fiscal year 1968.

Awarded by the Military Airlift Command, most of the contracts were for international airlifts. Only $44 million was allocated for domestic and Alaska traffic.

Sixteen of the 22 airlines carry passengers and cargo to Southeast Asia.

Commercial airlines are currently carrying about 35 percent of routine Military Airlift Command cargo and 90 percent of the passengers worldwide.

Military Aircraft, Ships Prohibited from Shipping Donated Gifts to Vietnam

Military Airlift Command facilities cannot be used for the transportation of donated or collected goods to Vietnam, according to Air Force officials.

Air Force officials said requests for transport of such goods to Vietnam should be referred to volunteer organizations registered with the Agency for International Development (AID).

It was explained that military operations in Southeast Asia preclude use of government airlift or sealift for delivery of donated materials. An Air Force spokesman said AID will reimburse ocean freight costs for donated goods handled by its volunteer groups.

In the past, civic groups and organizations occasionally have arranged to place gifts on aircraft on a space available basis. During the Christmas season many such requests had to be turned down because of the heavy backlog of essential military airlift cargo. The new rule amounts to a prohibition on non-military supplies.

Sole exception is a Navy-support program called Operation Handclasp, which permits limited sea shipment of private goods on a space available basis as long as the transport does not interfere with fleet operations.

Maj. Gen. Breitweiser Named To Succeed Late Alaska CinC

President Johnson has nominated Maj. Gen. Robert A. Breitweiser, USAF, to be Commander-in-Chief, Alaskan Command. He was also nominated for appointment to lieutenant general.

Gen. Breitweiser replaces Lt. Gen. Glen R. Birchard, USAF, who recently died as a result of an aircraft accident.

The new CinC, Alaskan Command, has been Vice Commander, Air University and Commandant, Air War College, Air University, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

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Price 5 cents (single copy). Subscription Price: $2.50 per year; $3.25 additional for foreign mailing.